

# KEEPING FIT AFTER FIFTY IS EASY, SAYS AUTHORITY

Dr. Anderson, Famous Head of Yale Gymnasium, Explains Simple Exercises Any One May Take to Win Health

**T**WO simple rules underlying all gymnastic and dietetic effort to keep the body young at fifty years and over will interest men who have turned the half century mark and who are coming up to it; that is, everybody. They will recognize the right of the layer down of these rules because he is director in the famous Yale gym, and additional details about him will be welcome to the reader.

Dr. William Gilbert Anderson of Philosophy and Medicine is himself past sixty, but by carefully adopting his own advice and using selected forms of exercise for the adult he more nearly resembles a man of forty. He was born in 1860 in St. Joseph, Mich.; his father was pastor of a Congregational Church there and a chaplain in the civil war.

Dr. Anderson was prepared for college at the Roxbury Latin School, Boston, and took his degree in arts at the University of Wisconsin in 1882 and in 1884 followed with an M. D. degree from Adelbert College. For seven years he had charge of the gymnasium of the Adelphi Academy, Brooklyn, and he took charge of the Department of Physical Education and the new gym at Yale in 1892.

While directing the gymnasium Dr. Anderson entered Yale as a sophomore; he was then 36 years old; six years later he won his B. A., and one year afterward his M. A. Six years later he earned a degree as M. S. from the Yale Scientific School, all this while carrying on his work in the gym of Yale and that of the Normal School. When 55 years old he entered Harvard and in a year had won the Doctorate in Public Health, this being the seventh degree of its kind given by Harvard and the first by Yale. At this age he climbed both Popocatepetl and Ixti in Mexico, thus demonstrating what a middle aged man can do who has coupled with careful living, reasonable forms of neuro-muscular exercise.

By DR. WILLIAM G. ANDERSON.  
Director of Yale University Gymnasium.

**W**HY does a successful business man disregard the most important investment it is possible for him to make by permitting the machinery upon which he depends entirely for his advancement to become inefficient?

For some years I have been trying to find an answer to this question, and while not able to furnish a satisfactory explanation I believe I can throw a little light on the subject.

There has been much written lately on the bodily uplift of the fifty-year-old youngster which in itself is suggestive of the demand for something tangible or effective, something that will enable this half century runner to continue.

Years ago I heard a Westerner speak of "raising more corn to feed more hogs to buy more land," and so it seems to-day that our successful business man wants to travel around in a similar circle, for he whips the body hard to do greater business to swell his bank account, and with exceptions the family comes trotting along afterward and his own physical machinery begins to show signs of giving out. When this stage is reached what does this man do?

He may consult a doctor, who, after devoting time to the examination, recommends a change of diet (never is this factor omitted), orders a change in the daily routine, then finally he passes over the subject of exercise by referring the patient to some physical culture expert.

In the large cities there are a number of competent leaders in the science of body rebuilding, but too often the ailing one is attracted by the Aladdinlike promises of the expert who will cure him while he waits; he will give him wonderful muscles; he will bring him back the alertness of younger days; he will renew his youth, and all this by mail or by actual personal contact.

**The Tired Business Man Takes a Course of Body Building**

It is the drowning man who grasps at straws, and so our tired but successful business man takes up this form of body building. The first effect is psychological plus some muscle soreness, and the reaction is stimulating, but why go further?

Does he keep it up? No; he gives it up and finds it easier to take a pill or drink medicated waters. It is simpler and he is no longer worried by lame muscles and does not have to take precious, money-worth time to go to a gymnasium, where he must undress, exercise, bathe, rest and dress for the street.

I am not belittling the value of rational neuro-muscular training, but dwelling upon the mental attitude of the average man who finds himself in the list mentioned above.

Why is it that a brainy man will permit himself to get into such condition? A man with sane perspective, an observing man, a thinking man?

Yet he does, and slowly and insidiously the weakness comes over him, and when too late he arouses himself, only to find that the struggle is too much for him, so he gives up, and by travelling and visiting spas and paying enormous doctor bills, all

out of money interest proportions, he plays out and others spend the money he has made.

This man may note the straws in the wind if he will take personal stock, and among the first indications of loss of energy is the unwillingness to exert himself as he used to. In little, almost unnoticed ways he saves himself or does not want to make the effort that a few years ago he would have ridiculed—slight irritability if called to the phone, if asked to go out for the evening, if required to leave his desk to attend a minor detail of business, if called upon to perform duties about the home, &c.

There is generally one cause, and that is growing fatigue; but he won't have it and attributes it to some inactivity of the organs of the body or a slight indisposition, but not to physical retrogression.

**Signs of Retrogression at 50 Are Not Seriously Regarded**

The change in the accuracy of the memory, the tendency to devote more time to introspection of a less happy kind, signs of distrust, lack of old time confidence in himself, less faith in his ability—these are signs of overwork, or fatigue, or giving out—you may select the term you prefer—but when these changes do come then it is safe to say the red flag of danger is flying.

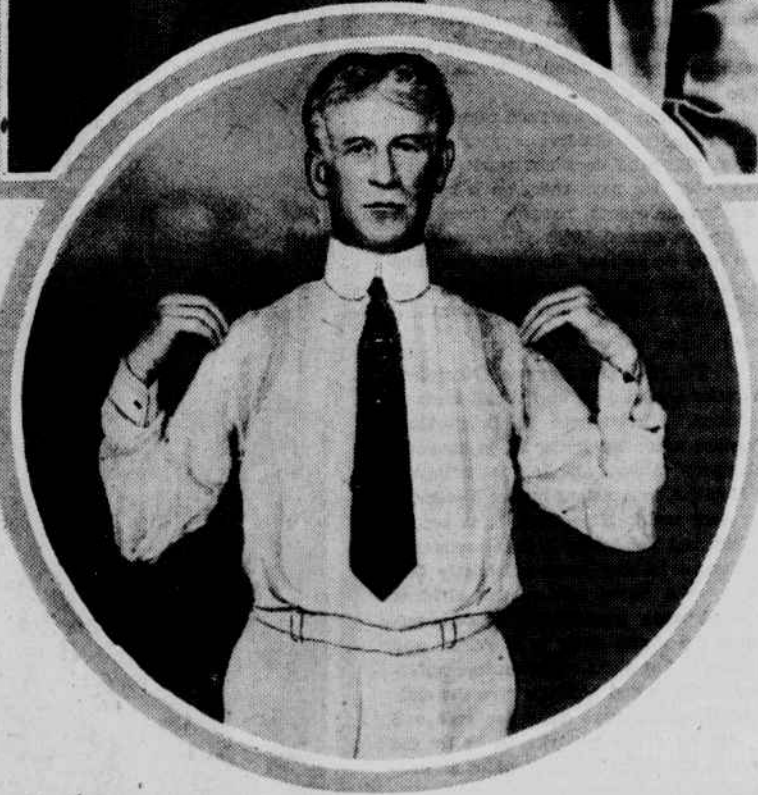
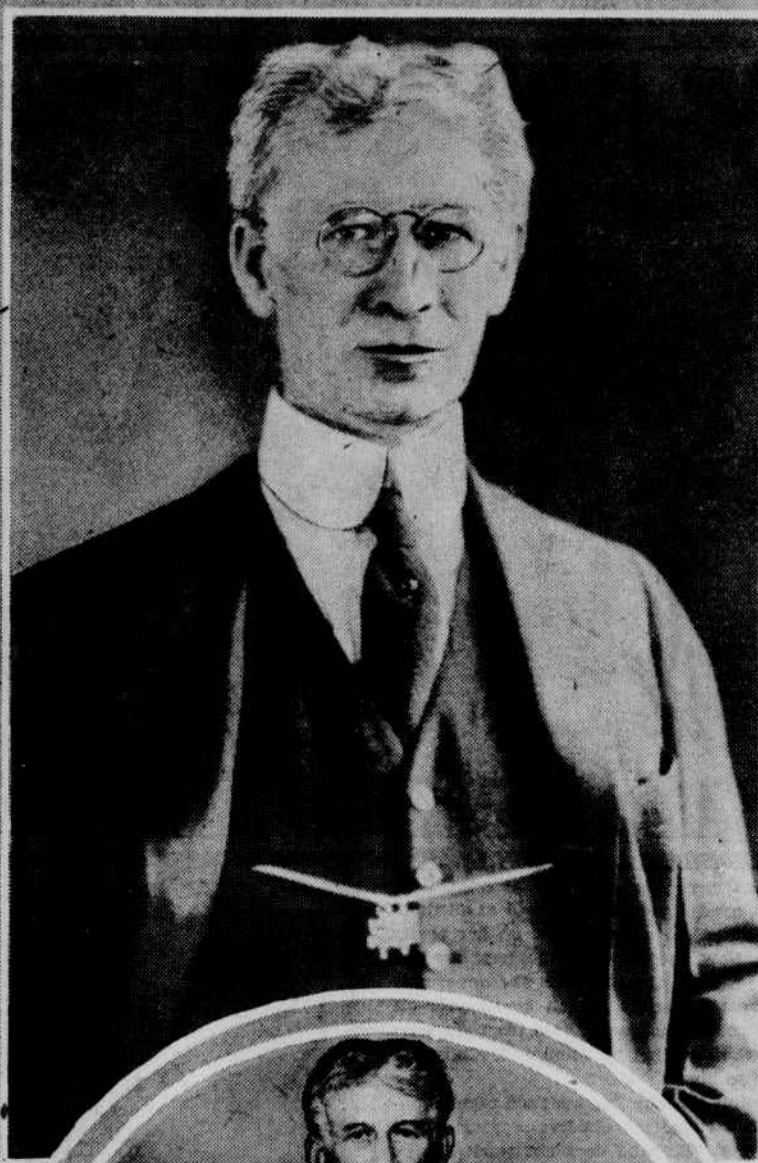
It is at this time our business man begins to inspect methods of renewing his youth, so he consults his physician with the results above mentioned, but even the doctor is unable to give a prescription of exercise, and it is quite as absurd to say to a worn-out, irritable man, "Take exercise," as it is to say go to a drug store and buy some medicine, so he has an interview with the physical culture expert, whose knowledge of developing muscles may be excellent, but whose attainments along dietary, psychological and physiological lines are decidedly limited.

Think of making a tired man take strenuous exercise with the expectation of improving, and yet the patient accepts this very thing; but this patient, a clever business man, would never handle his money in such an unwise way nor "pay too much for his whistle," as Franklin said.

Why does the ordinary individual know so little about these matters? Simply because he has never been educated along these lines; but if this is the case, then why let the children grow up in ignorance of the simple laws of conservation of somatic energy? Let the parent insist that his offspring be educated in these subjects, and his demands will be listened to because he has power, financial and social.

Is our adult ignorant of the laws of inheritance? Not at all; for he knows that there is much in "like father, like son"; but as a business investment he is doing much for that child who will come to him, or if already on the scene and paying for the errors of the father is the child to blame? He surely was not consulted before making his babylike bow to this world.

It may seem a waste of time to dwell upon such topics, but the question of health and bodily efficiency is a matter of education, and effectiveness of the methods of procedure will depend upon the training



Photographs specially posed for The New York Herald by Dr. W. G. Anderson of Yale to show his simple health exercises.

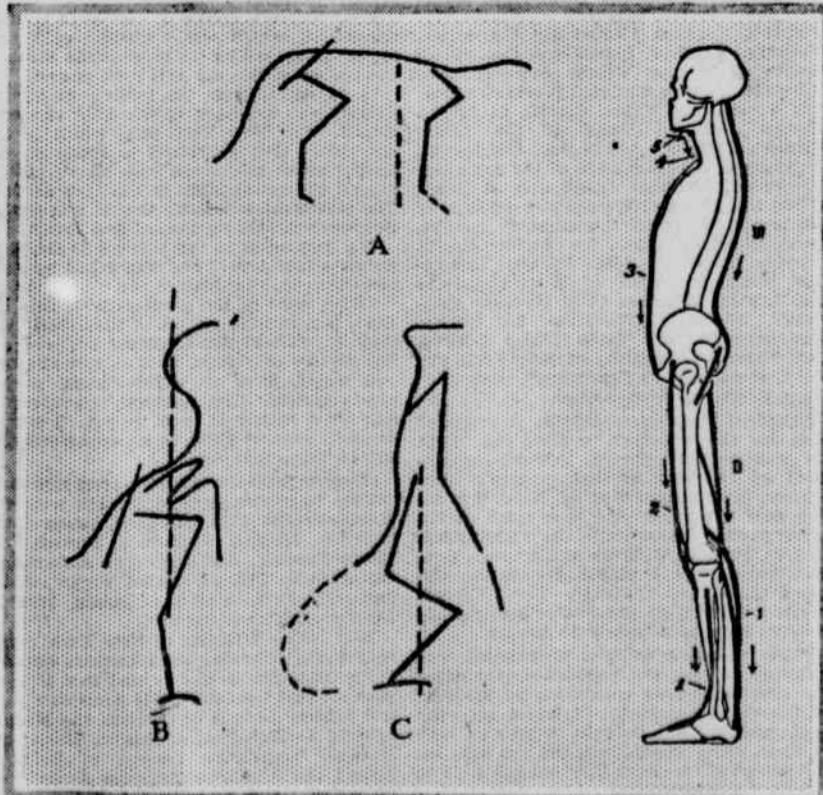
of the ancestors; this is my reason for reiterating old and well worn advice.

The two great instincts in life are procreation and combativeness, and both depend upon physical integrity, both disappear when the body fails, and perhaps in these respects more than in any others men become sensitive and seek bodily rejuvenation; but it comes tardily if at all, so they become further interested in the transplanting of organs.

I have in the Yale gymnasium many looking glasses, before which I want our students to stand and study their physiques. The results are good, for the men develop a healthy interest in their growth and symmetrical development. If it is vanity, then let us be thankful for vanity, but we should

not accuse the fair sex of monopolizing the mirror. They know a good thing—I am referring to the habit, not the daughter of Eve herself.

I was interested in examining the advertisements in the Photographic Section of THE NEW YORK HERALD for June 5. There were forty of them, and of this number eleven, or over 25 per cent., told of cures for the hair or were devoted to the care and beautifying of the hair or saving it. Four told how to reduce fat, five told how to make the form perfect by corsets and stays, four promised velvety skins, one would treat the feet and one promised proper adornment by dress, that is, twenty-six of these advertisements were devoted to saving what was left of youthful good



A—Outline of quadruped, axis of spine almost at right angles to dotted vertical line. B—Outline of bird, axis of spine obliquely to vertical. C—Outline of monkey, axis of spine also obliquely to the vertical. Huxley's diagram of the human, showing need of an erect position.

Cites His Own Experience After 48 as Showing Inestimable Value of Versatility of Systematic Muscular Movement

looks or enhancing physical beauty. Do you recall the lines from Holmes?

"My lady's face can boast no more  
The cranberry pink and white it wore;  
And where the shining locks divide,  
The parting line is all too wide."

We may laugh at the jingle, but that

The next exercise is for the heart and lungs, which are actively stimulated by rapid leg work.

Several times a day resort to rapid walking, or if in fair condition walk quickly up stairs. Acquire an alert, sprightly walk, and if out doors keep up the pace for two or more blocks and note the change in the heart beat and in the respiration.

These exercises are recommended to those not in a pathological condition. They are excellent; they are about all I ever take, and I know they are worth while.

The very best developing work I ever did was when I was 45 years of age. A careful record has been kept of the test, which extended over a college year, the results were unexpectedly satisfactory, and the mental reaction splendid. I gained twenty pounds that year.

Then I used apparatus, played a few games and did running. Of course diet always enters into consideration.

May I here sound a warning, and that is to the man who enters business, marries, has a family and carries the responsibilities that come to such a one. Do not try to keep up the muscular pace that you had while in college. Exercise some, but not too much; play the game with ardor, but make it shorter. There are men who claim that twenty years later they can play tennis, handball or squash as they did in college, and no doubt they can, but they pay too great a price, because much energy must go into business, &c.

The busy adult does not require so much muscular activity; a moderate amount is imperative to create metabolism in the tissues, but it is unhealthy to draw too heavily upon the physical bank account by too long periods of exercise.

Man is the only animal who does and can stand erect, and he should keep his spine in normal position every time he has a chance and this gives him much exercise. Try it and see.

Study the obliquity of the spine in the outline drawings of animals and a bird and then compare with the axis of the spine in Huxley's cut.

The question has often been asked: "Is the son better than the father—is he bigger, stronger and more capable physically?"

There is so little difference between the measurements of the present Yale freshman and his father when judged by the girths of chest, waist, legs and arms and the height and weight that we cannot use these comparisons as a criterion. The two sets of measurements are practically the same, the son being a little taller and having a slightly larger chest. He should be more efficient because of the greatly improved methods used in hygiene and in education. It is like comparing two safes of the same size; we do not know how much they hold, but one may have more in it than the other.

A form of exercise I recommend is dancing.

It is known that rational dancing, either social or stage, more or less actively stimulates the action of the heart and lungs. In turn, these activities send fresh arterial blood to the organs and tissues of the body, producing a chemical change, a constructive metamorphosis of the cells which results in improved conditions, in better health. In this respect the dance is good for both old and young.

There are, roughly speaking, two brains—one for movement, the other for intellectual activities. These are closely correlated, are interdependent, and the development of one will materially assist when the other is to be trained.

The muscle brain is called the motor area, the Rolandic division, and, like its sister brain, is made up of millions of cells. Just as soon as a definite circuit can be made among the cells and energy is liberated skilled movement is the result. The muscle has not a scintilla of skill in itself, it is merely a servant.

The greater number of "circuits" completed, the greater the muscular education of the person and the more reliable is the physical basis of psychic activity. Dancing is valuable in this respect because through pleasurable means permanent and trustworthy circuits are built. The muscularly versatile man possesses good brain substance, which may be easily trained mentally, but like gold hidden in the ground it is valueless unless used. The majority of college athletes stand well as students, many of them receiving honors.

**Dancing to Be Combined With Good Gymnastic Drill**

Dancing alone will never take the place of gymnastic drill; the two should be wisely combined. Formal gymnastics have so much in their favor that they should not be entirely eliminated from our system of bodily development, but the love for dancing should be utilized by teachers of gymnastics.

The teacher of dancing should adopt gymnastic movements, and the director of physical training should teach dancing movements that have for their object poise, balance and grace.

The subject of exercise for men in middle life is a complex one, and the various sub-topics are numerous. In this consideration I have necessarily confined myself to the main theme. For years I have been interested in research work in physical education, especially in those subjects that are closely related to the physical basis of psychic activity.

My conclusion is that versatility in muscular movement develops the brain substance and that here lies one of the sanest arguments for rational athletics and gymnastics.

man or woman who daily parts a few strands of hair sees nothing funny in it.

I went yesterday to consult one of our prominent business men and while talking he took from his pocket a small vial, from which he poured a few drops of liquid on a growing bald spot on his head, with the remark: "I seem to be growing bald so I use this stuff; moreover, I am losing my pep and feel like the dickens too much of the time." That was not just the word he used, but it sounds better in print.

**Dr. Anderson Gives the Way to Ward Off That "Tired Feeling"**

I am going to tell this business man how he can ward off this tired feeling and how he can benefit his children by making them take the same simple exercises, for they will be twice blessed in getting the personal benefits and in passing the inherited tendencies on to their children.

Will the reader pardon me if I refer to my own experience? I have been in this work just fifty years and for forty of these years I have been a teacher, so there should be some healthy results, or at least positive ideas, regarding the actual state of affairs in this country.

I am too busy as chief executive to don a gymnasium suit. I never exercise in the generally accepted fashion, that is, I never go upon the main floor where the apparatus is and I very seldom take the numerous gymnastic motions that seem to be popular, yet I bring strongly into action many times a day the principal groups of large muscles by merely contracting them. This is done by taking the position of a soldier. See Fig. 1.

Note also how these groups of muscles are outlined in the drawing taken from Huxley. The back of the leg, the front of the thigh, the posterior portion of the hips and all along the back. Many muscles are contracted for only a few seconds at a time, but later the habit of standing well becomes a habit and the contractile tissues take on unusual strength and endurance, even after 50 years of age. This form of gymnastics can be taken at any time and in almost any place and no gymnasium or apparatus or cost is demanded.

Now for the two exercises: First assume a correct standing position, then bend the arms smartly as in Fig. 2; at this time force back the abdominal walls, arch to its utmost the chest, press the back of the neck against the collar. Next thrust the two arms upward as in Fig. 3 and bend the body slightly backward. Finally, return to position No. 2 and then to the starting attitude. Do the work with energy and hold each position several seconds.

One will be surprised to note how much energy is required for the work. What has taken place?

The chest has been widened and deepened, the abdominal organs brought back where they belong or nearly so. (In most cases of protruding abdomen there is a displacement of the abdominal viscera, or falling of the organs.) The muscles of the arms, shoulders, back and abdomen are brought smartly into action and the chemical changes which take place result in growth, endurance and increased efficiency.

The lungs are to be filled when the arms are raised above the head and emptied when they are lowered.